

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

Claims 22-36 are pending. Claim 22 is amended.

The amendment to Claim 22 is discussed in detail further below. No new matter is added in the above amendment.

Examiner Interview Summary

On January 14, 2010, an interview was conducted between Applicant's representative and Examiners Yabut and Luong.

The interview is summarized on the Examiner Interview Summary Form, stating that "an agreement was reached" and that the proposed amendment "would patentably distinguish over the Japanese reference." See form PTOL-413.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 22-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. JP20021222718. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Reconsideration and withdrawal thereof are requested.

As is discussed in the Record (and was discussed during the interview), this reference fails to disclose or suggest the axial groove being fixed. Figure 1 in the prior art would be viewed as disclosing a fixed member 11 having a slot leading to an opening

defined by the length of “W.” As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, the fixed member is received between the leading edge of the collar and the portion indicated by reference numeral 19. The collar 17 is axially moveable against a spring, and as such, retraction of the collar enables the fixed member 11 to locate against the body 19 and the collar then abuts the fixed member thereby clamping it to position.

On the other hand, in the present invention, the load-bearing ring defining two opposed shoulder portions 7a and 7b, functions in that the axial distance between the shoulder portions is fixed. This defines an engagement portion of the abutment body 12. The abutment body is therefore supported axially by the shoulder portion 7a and 7b and the spring loaded collar 1 retains the bracket 8 in an engagement with the abutment body 12.

Accordingly, in the present invention, the axial length of the peripheral groove is fixed. This enables significant support on either side. The collar does not actually support the restraint of the fixed member and as such, the assemble forces and the axial load rating are independent of one another. The axial load that the abutment can resist is not therefore dependent upon the strength of the spring on the collar and is therefore capable of sustaining sufficiently increased axial loads. This is a clear advantage over the cited prior art, which fails to disclose or suggest at least this feature.

As stated by the Examiner on Form PTOL-413, an amendment incorporating the feature that opposed shoulders 7a and 7b define the axial length of the peripheral groove would patentably distinguish the reference. The above amendment accomplishes that.

At least in the view of the differences above, it cannot be said that the prior art meets the requirements for anticipation.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

Entry of the Amendment

Applicants submit that this amendment presents no new issues that would require further searching or that raised new issues for the Examiner to consider. Additionally, the Amendment places all the claims in condition for allowance.

Specifically, the above Amendment primarily adds a feature that the anchoring device further comprises “two opposed shoulders that define the peripheral groove, the opposed shoulders having a fixed axial distance between each other that remains fixed when the collar is moved along the sleeve in an axial direction...”

Applicants respectfully submit that any other amended features of the claim should only require a cursory review by the Examiner. See MPEP §714.13.

Applicants’ previous response distinguishes the present invention over the prior art by stating, among other things, that the load-bearing ring defines two opposed shoulder portions. See page 6 of the previous response. The outstanding Office Action acknowledges Applicants’ comments, but notes that the two opposed shoulder portions were “not recited in the rejected claims.” See page 5 of the outstanding Office Action. Subsequently, the shoulder portions were discussed in detail during the Examiner interview. The Interview Summary Form, completed by the Examiner states that “the

Examiner and Applicant agreed to include the feature regarding the opposed shoulders 7a and 7b that define the fixed axial length to the peripheral groove 6 in claim 22.”

Applicants respectfully submit that this feature was included in the above amendment.

The Examiner’s Interview Summary Form even acknowledges that the shoulder feature of the above amendment would overcome the prior art. It cannot be said that the amendment creates a new issue.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment at least “adopts Examiner’s suggestions, or removes issues for appeal or in some other way requires only a cursory review by the Examiner.” See MPEP §714.13. Thus, the amendment should be entered.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment coincident to this Request to Deposit Account 50-2752.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Myers, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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